

# PURDUE NORTH CENTRAL STUDENT WRITING



# PORTALS

Vol. 10 Spring 1981



**PURDUE NORTH CENTRAL  
STUDENT WRITING**

**PORTALS**

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Vol. 10 Spring 1981

## FOREWORD

In this tenth edition of *PORTALS*, funds for which have been generously appropriated by the Student Senate, we are able to include all the winners in both the Freshman and Open Writing Contests. All winning entries in the Freshman Contest were written as assignments by students enrolled in Freshman English courses at PNC this year; those winning entries in the Open Contest were submitted by members of the PNC student body in general.

As the table of contents will indicate, some winners earned more than one award since authorship is secret until after the winners are selected by the judges. For the first time, cash prizes, funded from the Annual Book Sale, are being awarded to all the winners whose work is published in this edition. The first prize in each contest is \$25, second prize \$20, third prize \$15, and \$10 to each of the honorable mentions, a total of twelve cash prizes altogether.

We are indeed grateful to all those entrants who have made *PORTALS* a success once again, and we congratulate those entrants whose work appears here. It is gratifying to know that this year, as in previous years, the winners represent a wide cross-section of PNC students.

DIRECTOR, STUDENT WRITING CONTEST: Professor Barbara Lootens

EDITORIAL DIRECTOR: Professor Hal Phillips

TECHNICAL DIRECTOR: Professor Hal Phillips

FACULTY JUDGES: Professors John Pappas, John Stanfield, Roger Schlobin  
Barbara Lootens, Hal Phillips

STUDENT JUDGES: Rosa Nelson, Carolyn Barnard,  
Russell Sutcliffe, Susan Howard



## TABLE OF CONTENTS

### **Freshman Contest - 1981**

#### **First Prize Winner**

|                |                                    |   |
|----------------|------------------------------------|---|
| William Watson | <i>The Ghost of Dean Moriarity</i> | 1 |
|----------------|------------------------------------|---|

#### **Second Prize Winner**

|                |                   |   |
|----------------|-------------------|---|
| Julie J. Nover | <i>Whiz On By</i> | 2 |
|----------------|-------------------|---|

#### **Third Prize Winner**

|                |                  |   |
|----------------|------------------|---|
| Cynthia Tatman | <i>The Climb</i> | 6 |
|----------------|------------------|---|

#### **Honorable Mention**

|                 |                            |   |
|-----------------|----------------------------|---|
| William Watson  | <i>Born in the Sixties</i> | 7 |
| Barbara Transki | <i>Burnin' Love</i>        | 9 |
| William Watson  | <i>The Tin Drum</i>        | 9 |

### **Open Contest - 1981**

#### **First Prize Winner**

|                |                  |    |
|----------------|------------------|----|
| William Watson | <i>Callouses</i> | 10 |
|----------------|------------------|----|

#### **Second Prize Winner**

|              |                                  |    |
|--------------|----------------------------------|----|
| Susan Howard | <i>The Allegory of Britomart</i> | 12 |
|--------------|----------------------------------|----|

#### **Third Prize Winner**

|                 |                                   |    |
|-----------------|-----------------------------------|----|
| Eduard Erslovas | <i>The Drama of Transcendence</i> | 16 |
|-----------------|-----------------------------------|----|

#### **Honorable Mention**

|                 |   |    |
|-----------------|---|----|
| Eduard Erslovas | <i>"Dover Beach"—Sublime Subjectivity</i> | 18 |
| Bonnie Spears   | <i>Reality and King Lear</i>              | 18 |
| Karen McNally   | <i>"since feeling is first"</i>           | 21 |

## THE GHOST OF DEAN MORIARTY

An old proverb says, "The Lord watches over and protects fools and drunken men." To this list of divinely protected miscreants I would add "hitchhikers." Despite the numerous dangers inherent in hitchhiking, in over 8,000 miles, I have never had a dangerous or uncomfortable moment. Like Dean Moriarty, the hero of Jack Kerouac's *On the Road*, I have crossed and recrossed the wide, diverse, unpredictable expanses of America by relying on a combination of luck, wit, and the good will of my fellow men for protection and transportation. In the course of these bohemian wanderings I have seen many of the great natural wonders of this continent and met an intriguing cross-section of Americans. Mountains, deserts, prairies, and rivers, "hippies", "rednecks", soldiers and stockbrokers, ministers and mercenaries formed the course of study in an open-air academy of Americana. It was a profound experience. My first trip to California in August of '77 stands out in my memory as both the best and wildest of my hitchhiking sojourns in symbolic quest of the ghost of Dean Moriarty.

On August 22, 1977, at 12:01 A.M. I was standing on the on-ramp of the Indiana Toll Road in Lake Station. Excited by the prospect of my planned continent-wide adventure, I waited for westbound traffic to appear. As I breathed in the still, humid, fume-scented air, I could see a summer thunderstorm illuminating the air over the U.S. Steel Works six miles to the west. I had decided to use my two weeks' vacation to hitch westward to California and enlist in the effort to contain a massive forest fire in the Los Padres National Forest, fifty miles south of San Francisco. A whole continent of possibilities stretched before me like a carpet of dreams. After about thirty minutes I got a ride. I was westbound at last.

My clean-cut appearance and hard-earned hitchhiking finesse made the rides plentiful, and easy to get, as I followed my proposed route west on I-80 to San Francisco. For the first time in my life I crossed the Mississippi River. Crossing the broad, brown river at dawn, I was dazzled by the reflections of the rising sun on the muddy waters. This was the first of the many great moments I enjoyed as the scenery of the West unfolded around me. The full impact of entering this spectacular terrain came as the rolling midwestern farmland of Iowa and east Nebraska gave way to the flat, arid, lightly populated Great Plains. The beauty and power of the West struck me like a revelation. I had never known such huge expanses of empty land, such rugged mountains, such pure air, and such a wide blue sky.

On the Great Plains of Nebraska I watched a towering thunderstorm float towards me across the wide flat lands like some great, cloud-bodied ocean jelly fish, lashing the prairie with tentacles of lightening and rain. The Wyoming landscape of multi-colored buttes, mesas, and plateaus in never-ending permutations of shape and combination made me feel reverent towards the enormous complexity of creation. Wyoming looked like the world must have been before the evolution of man: vast, empty, unspoiled, and seemingly endless. Further west, the sun setting over Great Salt Lake provided a scene of breath-taking beauty. The surreal emptiness of the Utah salt deserts under the moon that night made me think of the Buddhist concept of nothingness. On the return trip, sleeping out in the Nevada desert, I was startled by the clarity of the clean desert air; the sky seemed to be ablaze with millions of constellations, galaxies, stars, and planets I had never seen. Just over the California state line, I was awe-struck by the rugged beauty of the Sierra Nevada mountains. The lofty, rocky, pine covered spires towered so far over the thin ribbon of I-80 that, at times, I felt as if we were driving into a tunnel. On the California coast I sat on the rocky headlands at Big Sur and watched the setting sun recede into the Pacific Ocean as waves crashed onto the shore of that renowned coastline. That night I slept within sound of those waves and awoke at dawn to the sound of sea lions and seals barking in Monterey Bay.



The unaltered wildness and vast size of the Great American West had a lasting effect on me. Afterwards I could never completely ignore the element of intense beauty that is found in even the simplest of nature's creations. The people I met along the way, however, were just as interesting and enlightening.

It's strange how readily people will talk about their deepest, most private thoughts and important experiences to a hitchhiker, a complete stranger, when both are passengers in an automobile during a long journey. A special bond seems to be formed that allows a discussion of life's mysteries, and a person's more profound thoughts come naturally to the fore. A big, burly trucker in Iowa, who was reticent at first, opened up more and more as the miles flew by. In a low, subdued voice that was just barely audible over the sound of his truck, he told me dozens of stories about his experiences: trucking, as a Marine sergeant in Vietnam, and as an inmate of a prison in Idaho. In Wyoming, a retired naval officer offered humorous insights into the State Department and diplomatic protocol he had gleaned as a military attache in Berlin. A wild ex-minister gave me an exciting ride across Nebraska. Driving 100 miles an hour, he kept up a maniacally funny monologue about women, guns, and "the goddam commies" which he punctuated with snorts from a bottle of Wild Turkey. A lady college professor in California lauded the selflessness I displayed in volunteering to fight the Los Padres fire. She gave me a short, succinct lecture on the values of self-sacrifice in modern society. A born-again Christian displayed a conspicuous lack of Christian charity when he unceremoniously dumped me on the road side after I told him that I thought Christianity was a religion that embraced death at the expense of life. And a Wyoming state trooper gave me a ride of 100 miles one cold night on the return trip because, he said, I had a "real trustworthy face." I met and talked to a wide cross-section of Americans on the trip; and, despite our widely different backgrounds and environments, I was able to relate to them all. I was struck by their unity of vision, their similar motivations and common dreams. The trip left me with a sense of the natural unity of man, and afterwards I felt renewed in my belief in the positive, life-loving side of the American soul.

Hitchhiking was, for me, an almost mystical rite of passage. Learning that I was able to survive, in unfamiliar surroundings and hostile climates, made me more confident of my ability to cope with more mundane occupations. Because of my exposure to these vastly dissimilar norms in terrain and personality, I gained a feeling of closeness to the pulse beat of American life and culture. I acquired a more intimate understanding of my human brothers and sisters and a deep reverence for all of the creations of nature. I doubt that I will ever again hitchhike cross-country. But if I should again seek to retrace the footsteps of Dean Moriarty and Sal Paradise, roaming the roads and highways of the American night . . . I know it will be one helluva interesting trip.

—WILLIAM WATSON

## **Second Prize Winner**

**"WHIZ ON BY, MY GREATEST JOY—WHIZ ON BY, MY DEEPEST SORROW"**

As the autumn leaves fall and the morning mist rolls in, my heart races back to another time. Fall holds so many beloved memories, some good and some bad, but all of them priceless. At the time, I had no way of knowing just how much it would all come to mean, but as fall creeps into winter, I realize just how much I have lost. With each coming of winter, my loss seems to grow. It has been two winters since the front lot stood barren and void of activity. I drove past there a few times, to remember, perhaps to forget, perhaps just to feel. Time has marched over the days that are occasionally flooded with memories, but so many memories are as vivid as if they had happened yesterday. Yesterday seems only a breath away, the yesterday that I said good-bye to my beloved Whiz On By.



When I first met Whiz, he was a lanky two-year-old. We looked at him and pondered if he was a "rough diamond or a diamond in the rough." Time would tell, but for then, he was a plain American Saddlebred gelding, shy the dynamics inherent of the breed, but he stood an impressive 16.1 hands\*. He was generously trimmed with three white socks and a narrow blaze with a connecting snip. There's a saying that if a horse has three white feet, he's fit for a king. Regardless of the saying, he had to be a better show horse than the five-gaited mare I owned. It was winter, and Whiz's long, shaggy, brown coat masked whatever was underneath. However, there was enough visible dissimilarity between this colt and "Wicked Wanda" that I was anxious to own him. Wanda's pedigree read like the "Who's Who" of the Saddlebred world, so Whiz's owner, who was in the breeding business, was willing to make a deal. The particulars were ironed out, and the silly colt was in the trailer and on the way to his new home.

Home, at that time, was in Merrillville at the second location of business that Rose and I ran. It was our profession to make show horses and show riders. Our success had been well documented, and there were no visible signs of our business bearing anything but the sweetest of fruit. Whiz was very apprehensive of his new home, and of his new handlers. He soon turned his natural apprehension into a game and began kicking the walls of his stall everytime something new happened in the barn. "Banger" would cause a fracas at the slightest provocation. The stable doors being opened to receive a load of hay was all the excuse he needed to make a fuss. As time strolled on, Banger became the proud owner of more than one nickname. I often referred to him as my "Unicorn" because he had a protruding bone growth above his left eye that faintly resembled a unicorn's horn. A lot of colts are born with these horns, but the boney growth generally disappears with age. Perhaps this was Whiz's warning that, like Peter Pan, he was never going to grow up.

Business and personal circumstances forced us to relocate for a second time. Moving twenty-eight horses, their equipment, our training equipment, and everything that's needed to keep a show stable running at peak efficiency is not an easy task. I was elected to move the stable so Rose could be free to move her family. Like a band of gypsies, we arrived at what appeared to be our final settling place. Just outside of Chesterton stood the lovely stable with thirteen acres, a large outdoor arena, and spacious stalls. The Saddlebreds were in seventh heaven; however, the Morgans and Arabians seemed to be intimidated and dwarfed by the surroundings. The indoor arena was a two-hundred-foot by twenty-five-foot straight-away, which presented many training problems. That winter, however, everyone gained control over the aisle, and the riders seemed to enjoy the new challenge.

Looking back, it seems always to have been fall creeping into winter during the glorious time that I knew Whiz. Almost winter when I bought him, late fall when we first moved, and approaching winter when we moved the last time.

It seems a cruel fate, but the farther one gets from the Illinois state line with society show horses, the slower one starves to death trying to make a meager living. We didn't ask for much, just enough income to break even on the stable operations. It was not that we were failing to produce champions or blue-ribbon riders; the area lacked the affluence to sustain the luxury of owning and showing the high-tails. The financial albatross grew with each passing month, and a slow death of the area's only society stable was inevitable.

We ushered our customers and their horses to stables in Illinois and to boarding stables nearby. We retreated to a simple six-stall barn on top of a hill. There was no arena, no horse shower, no feed room, no lounge, no bustle that is accorded to a show stable, but this is where we hung our bridles, so it was home. We moved just prior to the Indiana State Fair Society Horse Show in Indianapolis. This show is ranked third in the nation for Saddlebreds, and we had always placed our horses in the ribbons down there. This year was our greatest challenge; the

\* Four inches equals one hand; measure is taken at the height of the wither.



show was only one week from the time of moving. There had been no time to tune any of our entries or time to iron out any leftover bugs from the last show. My last time out on Whizzer had been a disaster, and I had hurt my leg during the move, so it was decided that Rose's daughter, Mary Jo, would command Whiz at Indianapolis.

Whiz Banger, by this time, stood a regal 16.3 hands and had matured into a fine show horse. When he made his entrance into the Indianapolis coliseum, with Mary Jo astride, he was breathtaking. This was the first time I had ever seen him in the show ring, since I had always been in the irons before. I could not believe what I was seeing as I watched this magnificent copper horse with flashing white feet, mane and tail flowing in graceful rhythm with his explosive strides, touching level\* with every beat. He was marching to the tune commanded by Mary Jo. The blonde girl and the copper horse rode to the winner's circle twice that show. I engraved the image of them exiting the arena under the glare of the spotlight; twelve hundred pounds of explosive poetry, with the tri-colored ribbon flagging from his browband. I owned that magnificent creature and finally realized that with a little more time, he could be a World Champion.

Knowing that we had a potential world beater, Rose and I came home with more hopes and dreams than ever. We retreated to our humble surroundings for the winter. With a lot of imagination we saw our six stalls, one tack/warm up room, and the path around the corn field as a show stable.

That fall and winter was one of the most marvelous times I remember. We pulled the horse's show shoes and didn't bother to winter blanket them. For the first time, our show mounts were our pets. We went for winter rides under the electric power lines and along the toll road. Rose on her Morgan, Max, who was a little chestnut; and I on Whiz; one galloping, the other keeping stride at a trot. We were quite a sight to see and drew a lot of attention. Anticipation of the coming show season kept us warm on those winter rides and made our hearts race when we'd sit by the fireplace and chat. We had so much to look forward to; Max had approached his peak and leveled off to a fine show mount, and we could only guess at what laid in store for Whiz.

If there is a Lady Luck, she dealt Whiz an unjust hand, a event too cruel, but one that is part of Whizzer's history and must be told. In our pretend show stable, we had made pets of the show stock. It was grand fun, and the animals thrived on their newly found freedoms. It was such fun for all of us that we began to ease up on our once rigid standards. The slackness could have been the cause of the tragedy. I'll never know, but somehow, my fantastic Whiz Bang foundered.

Founder is a disturbance of the blood circulation to the foot and occurs within the horny hoof. Overeating, standing in a draft, pawing, cooling out too fast, or trauma sustained by fever or pounding on hard surfaces are some of the causes of founder. Although the causes are varied, the effects are definite. The inside of the foot swells and becomes feverish, causing extreme discomfort. In severe cases, the bones within the foot are relocated, resulting in the exterior of the foot becoming deformed. If the condition is detected during the early stages and prompt action is taken, the results are not as devastating.

As soon as we suspected a case of founder, we immediately stood Whiz in the mud to draw the fever from his feet, and phoned the veterinarian. By that evening, Whiz had been given the necessary injections to counteract the condition and was more comfortable. Founder, in itself, is not usually a major problem, but Whiz had terrible foot disorders. When I bought him, the deformity of his right front foot made it obvious that he had been foundered once before. The deformity was extreme enough to warrant the taking of x-rays to determine the bone structure. It was important to know the lay of the bones to shoe him to the best advantage. The x-rays not only told us the angle of the bones but told also of lameness not usually associated with a youngster. Huge side-bones, porous third pharllax bones in both front feet, the initial stages of navicular disease, and indication that he had sustained fractures of two bones in his right front foot were Whiz On By's burden for life. He was not yet five years old.

\* Term meaning from the point of the elbow to the knee; the forearm is elevated to a position that is level to the ground.



The founder aggravated the already crippling foot disorders. Whiz could not move from his feed box to the hay rack; it was all he could do to bow down to his water bucket. The pain in his front feet was excruciating. He hunkered, and his massive frame no longer appeared anywhere near its sixteen-plus hands. It was a time of great sadness on top of that hill. Our hopes and dreams had been dashed by a cruel twist of fate, and one of our beloved animals was wretched in misery. It was a time of decision making. The love of my life was in mortal pain, a picture of torture.

With such a degree of lameness, Whiz was worth only as much as my sentimental esteem of him. Words cannot express the agony in my heart as I was forced to make the decision that would alter Whiz's and my life. I had only one choice from the beginning. Whiz was paying the price for my dream.

In an attempt to forego the Inevitable, we tried shooting him up on Phenylbutazone. The "bute" served only to lessen the pain and did no real service. We had his feet blocked with alcohol injections twice. This helped his left front foot but, again, merely lessened the pain in the right foot. There was only one choice. In the end, I was praised and criticized, but I had him de-nerved. This is a simple surgical procedure, ligation of the main nerves leading to the back of the front foot. Recovery from a nerve ligation takes from four to six weeks, depending on the care given to the animal and on the heart and determination of the animal. Whiz made a quick recovery, but he would never be the same. He would always have to be ridden by a very accomplished rider and kept on the best of turf, and forever receive special care of his feet. As I assisted the veterinarian in the surgery, I thought that perhaps mine had not been the best decision, but Banger would be alive and never suffer constant pain. I knew that, in time, saying good-bye would be the result of this surgery, but I loved him enough to give him a second chance at life.

That show season, Whizzer had his share of problems. Even with the de-nerving, we had to keep him on Phenylbutazone. In true show horse form, he'd muster enough heart and courage to perform. All it took was the sound of a loud speaker, and Whiz was all show. My heart would bleed as he'd gather and hit the in-gate. I think he existed for the show ring, for as soon as his feet touched the tanbark, he was a different animal. At one show, he brought home four trophies, but as the Indiana Society Show drew nearer, he was again plagued by lameness.

We went to Indianapolis, but Whiz was not the explosive animal he'd been the year before. Max brought in the only ribbons. He had gone as far as he could under us. Max's main job in life had been to educate riders. We had no new riders; his purpose with us had been fulfilled. As an open competitor, he wasn't quality enough. In our hearts, Rose and I knew we had reached the end, but we could not speak it openly until we had gotten home.

We consigned all of our stock to the Tattersall's fall sale in Lexington, Kentucky. The decision was easy, compared to actually living with it. After our time in the sale aisle, I returned to our stalls where Whiz's new grooms were cooling him out. I had hoped they'd have finished with him, but he met me with his famous nicker as I approached. The tears would not hold back. I had sold the only real love of my life. Many people who had known Whiz and me as a team had said that if a horse was capable of love, surely Whiz loved me. Could he forgive me and still love me if he knew the reasons I had sold him? Would he understand that I couldn't bear to witness his suffering moments, and yet I couldn't deprive him of his life? I couldn't guarantee him the excellence of turf he needed; corn fields are unpredictable and we had no indoor arena. I couldn't imprison his spirit to a stall in our pretend-stable. I loved him enough to let him go.

The stable is empty. The front lot is empty. Saddles, bridles, and brushes are all packed away. Everything is neatly packed away, save for my memories that come alive every misty morning. The rides through the frost-brown corn are so vivid, I can feel the damp in my hair. I still wonder if Whiz reveled in the brisk dampness, or if he just mirrored by exhilaration. Some things I'll never know.

I still drive by the old place and see my beautiful Whiz frolicking in the snow, enjoying his freedom and proclaiming his majesty by snorting into the wind. Head



held high, nostrils flared, tail unfurled, marching through belly-deep snow drifts, his copper body poised and contrasted against the horizon, I engraved that image on my mind. I can see him anytime I choose. But, I wonder where he is, if he is all right, and if his new people love him as much as I do. Do they love him enough to let him go? Even now, as winter envelops the third year, my arms ache to reach out and hold my dearest friend and feel his warmth. He kept me warm on days such as this one. His absence has left an emptiness in my being. However, that emptiness remains warm in his memory. Whiz On By was my greatest joy and my deepest sorrow. I only hope his new owners love him as much as I do.

—JULIE J. NOVER

### Third Prize Winner

#### THE CLIMB

It was Day Five in what has become an annual great-escape adventure. The territory chosen for last year's bicycle conquest was Door County, a thumb-like peninsula jutting into Lake Michigan from northeastern Wisconsin. It had been a joyous morning's ride, cruising past orchard farms bursting with the regional apple and cherry crops, traveling along back county roads nestled in the damp, green woods. The brisk chill of the woodlands was swept away by the strong warmth of early afternoon sunshine as Don and I returned to the main road.

Highway 42, a roller coaster ribbon, hugged the shoreline, winding its way through picturesque port villages with names like Fish Creek, Egg Harbor, Gill's Rock and Sister Bay. Entrance into each village is routinely preceded by a long, steady uphill slope, but even the knowledge of this expectation could not prepare me for the challenge of Ellison Bay.

There it stood—a hill of mountainous character—taunting me with its never-ending incline. Shifting to low-gear, I prepared my partner, a trusty twelve-speed Fuji, for our task. In almost no time, the momentum gained in the downhill approach had deserted us.

"Oh shit!" I cried out in anguish. The pedals would barely rotate. Surely some prankster had substituted cast-iron skillets, woolen winter coats, and a heavy-duty Army-regulation sleeping bag for the cautiously weighed assortment of light-weight aluminum, nylon, cotton and down originally packed on my rear carrier. "I can't do it! My legs won't move!"

"Don't think about it. Just keep going and you'll be fine," was all the sympathy I received from Don. Don, with his determined head down and shoulders low, tanned muscles glistening with perspiration, steadily climbed the summit. Always the athletic competitor, he loved the challenge, the chance to test himself.

"Don't think about it! How can I not think about the fact that I'm dying!" But he was too far ahead to hear my lamenting.

"OK, Cindo, if he can do it, so can you," I murmured in vague self-encouragement as I too lowered by head to tackle the monster.

All concentration focused on the pavement beneath me. Muscles tensed the entire length of my legs. Push, Push, Harder. My feet performed their alternating functions. Oh the painful strain! Lead had buried itself in my calves. Sweat worked its way out of every pore. Why did I not spend my vacations basking on Jamaican beaches like sane people? Breathing became my focal point. Deep in, deep out . . . Push, Push, Push.

Suddenly—I had reached the top. The expansive view caused me to gasp in wonderment—soft emerald grass rolling down to a sparkling lake, billowing white sails drifting across the crystal blue water. To the right, standing tall and proud in the village ahead was the spire of a storybook church. And, most pleasant of all—a rugged carved wooden sign captioning this postcard with its yellow painted greeting—WELCOME—VILLAGE OF ELLISON BAY.

Dismounting my two-wheeled chariot, I ambled onto the grass, my legs as wobbly as those of a new-born colt. Joining Don atop a large rock, we gazed in silence, filled with mutual satisfaction.

A silver-gray Chrysler came up the highway, pulling off to the birm of the road. A short man in his mid-fifties emerged, wearing a Polaroid camera dangling around his neck. His wife stayed in the car, but he meandered over toward our rock perch. "Beautiful country, isn't it?" he commented, glancing around.

"That it is," I replied with a contented smile, while he could only take in the view, I had tasted the whole experience. He snapped a few pictures and went back to his car, leaving me to savor my rewards.

—CYNTHIA TATMAN

## Honorable Mention

### BORN IN THE SIXTIES

In the 1960's, the first stirrings of a new social, political and philosophical consciousness were felt in the United States. Responding to the repressed, isolationist attitudes predominant in the United States at the beginning of the decade, individual members of American society elected to abandon the traditional norms of "mainstream" social behavior and drop-out in search of alternative life styles. These people constituted a non-affiliated, unorganized social segment that came to be known as the "counterculture" because of it members' (or "hippies") opposition to a culture that they deemed decadent and evil. The members of this "counterculture" often expressed their contempt for "establishment" society by engaging in activities that were extremely distasteful to the "establishment": they used hallucinogenic drugs; they dressed in odd, ragged clothes; they refused to bathe; they wore long, unkempt hair; they advocated promiscuity or "free love"; they listened to blaring, incomprehensible music; they refused to work; they used more drugs; they professed strange religious beliefs; they had the steadfast idealism of youth.

Throughout a decade marred by such monstrous calamities as the Vietnam War and the racial violence in Watts, Detroit, and Chicago, the hippies of the counterculture vitally represented the forces of life and spiritual renewal. They were the harbingers of a subtle renaissance of the American spirit. In awakening the American people to the pressing need for agonizing reappraisal of their goals and methods, the counterculture directly affected the habits and self-image of an entire generation: the way they dress, the music they listen to, the way they think, and the way they view society. Many aspects of counterculture behavior, once ostracized and censured, have become deeply ingrained fixtures of American life.

The clothing and hairstyles of the hippies were in direct opposition to the socially accepted norms of their era. Hippies preferred informal, functional, comfortable clothes: clothes that bore hard usage well, did not hinder physical movement, and did not disguise the body of the wearer. Men often wore their hair very long; this has been the sign of the rebel, bohemian, and artist throughout history. Counterculture females commonly rejected the usage of make-up and brassieres. These habits of apparel and coiffure drew a cry of outrage from the conservatively dressed, close-barbered men and heavily made-up women of that time. The counterculture believed that dress and hairstyle should be an extension on, not a hindrance to, creative self-expression. They saw such fashion conventions as the three-piece suit, the brassiere, the crewcut, the tie, and feminine facial make-up as being symptomatic of mainstream American culture's denial of the natural beauty of the human body and, by extension, a denial of the natural beauty of the human spirit. The establishment-enforced standards of appearance were anathema to the hippies, and in response they adopted hair and clothing styles that reflected a more natural, less contrived standard of beauty.



The results of this revolution in hair and clothing styles are universally apparent. Americans have become a nation of blue jean wearers: close-fitting, comfortable, durable, functional, and form-revealing blue-denim trousers. Men's hairstyles are longer; in fact, short hair is now rare. Women are more free than formerly to wear whatever they choose without risking censure because of bralessness or innovative styles. These differences between the fashions now and the fashions of the early Sixties are directly attributable to the counterculture concept of dress as an extension of the inner being. In music as well as attire, the hippies rebelled against what they considered to be a repressive culture.

Recording artists, such as Bob Dylan and the Beatles, went beyond producing music that mirrored the times; they actually determined the temper of an age. These songs such as Dylan's "Blowing in the Wind" and "A Hard Rain's Gonna Fall" or the Beatles' "Revolution," angrily questioned the right of governments and institutions to demean human life, kill people, and destroy nature. The Beatles' "*Sergeant Pepper*" and Jimi Hendrix's "*Electric Ladyland*" used advanced, intricate recording techniques to create a surreal atmosphere that beckoned the listener to abandon traditional concepts of reality. The blasting volume; pulsing, blues-jazz-based rhythms; harsh vocals; and inspired musical improvisations of The Who, The Rolling Stones, and The Doors cried out, passionately and outrageously, against the spiritual desolation and aimlessness felt by the emerging generation. This generation had always lived in a spiritual vacuum; frightened by the looming spectre of nuclear holocaust, they were also despondent over the bleak prospect of living meaningless lives as automatons in society's factory. Because rock music so perfectly diagnosed the spiritual malaise suffered by so many, it became a force capable of shaping the thoughts, attitudes, and emotions of millions of people.

The major benefit of this massive, popular identification with rock-and-roll music was to provide the mass audience with an accessible, artist's overview of society. This perspective results in the medium serving as a kind of gut-level barometer, delineating the amount or frustration of fulfillment felt by the masses. Happy times produce mellow songs, but angry times produce angry music. While rock lyrics are generally inarticulate, the overall feeling of the music speaks eloquently of, and to, the spiritual hearts of tens of millions of people. This is an invaluable gift from the "counterculture."

The renaissance of the spirit began when Americans realized that their society had lost sight of its primary principle; the rights of the individual must be paramount. Institutions should exist only for the benefit of their members; the people should thrive at the expense of the institution and not vice versa. Those longhaired bedraggled "freaks" of the Sixties rebelled when they recognized the dire level to which American regard of human rights had fallen. A nation that wages war to allow its industrial complex to sell munitions for profit is intrinsically evil. If a nation orders its young men to die in battle, not to defend their homeland but because a law says they must, then that law is wrong and should be overturned. Similarly, no society should expect its citizens to live as automatons, divorced from their natural human need of joy, love, and creativity. These were the unspoken precepts of the counterculture creed; these are the lessons that they taught us.

With their unattractive exteriors of dirt, drug use, promiscuity, anarchism, and sloth, the hippies of the Sixties seem an unlikely source for a great social reform. However, when the observer delves beneath the layers of filth and extremism, he will find that the counterculture credo was of an idealistic belief in the divinely inspired perfectability of man. They also realized that to kindle this divine spark into flame, men need to live lives filled with spiritual growing room, emotional warmth, and abundant joy. We should not overlook this profound, timely message because of the ragged countenances of its purveyors. As Alfred North Whitehead said, "Great ideas often enter reality in strange guises and with disgusting alliances."

—WILLIAM WATSON



## Honorable Mention

### BURNIN' LOVE

Smells of sour beer and cheap perfume blew through the overflowing tiers of people assembled in the capacious auditorium, forging an unproved mystic bond among their diverse numbers. Camera flashbulbs exploded in the dusky recesses at the least provocation. Excited murmurs and whispered conjecture raced through the crowd like the humming of an overloaded telephone wire, creating a surging, unharnessed electric force. There was a mounting, nearly unbearable tension tangible in the air. This impassioned anticipation could only be relieved by the appearance of the legend, the man who had become the unquestioned idol of these questing hordes. The fervent atmosphere was contagious, and grudgingly even I became caught up in the intense web of emotion prevalent at this Elvis Presley concert.

Searching for a plausible explanation to this seemingly insane phenomenon, I looked about, examining those gathered in the dark arena. There apparently was a common need, some deeply shared longing, that drew us all together as if to partake of mass communion; however, the reason's elusiveness seemed, at first, overwhelming.

Vendors prowled the aisles hawking their wares. Glossy, autographed pictures; cheaply printed programs; and image-emblazoned tee-shirts were eagerly grabbed by the adoring fans. Fights broke out over who would purchase and take possession of neck scarves soaked in Elvis' own sweat. Everyone hungrily yearned to inherit some small part of this famous man's life—to touch some of his magic and hope it would take root in their own lives.

Elvis emulators were scattered throughout the audience. Slicked back ebony hair and bushy sideburns were affected in personal tribute. Sequinned outlines of Elvis covered their denim jackets, and turquoise encrusted rings decorated their fingers. They all walked with an insolent swagger, taking courage in a manufactured outward resemblance to their hero. Garish looking women in J.C. Penney formal gowns and light blue eye shadow adorned the men's arms. These loving couples clung to each other, waiting, as if for salvation, for the show to commence.

Lonely clusters of older women also were impatiently awaiting the arrival of their savior. They had a defeated look in their eyes like they had labored endless years for some ungrateful, petty tyrant calling himself either "boss" or "husband." Shifting uncomfortably on their bench seats, they nonetheless exhibited an animation not evidenced in their routine lives ever before.

Hard, blue-jeaned young people shallowly mocked the entire ritual. Their tough exteriors and snide remarks could not conceal their excitement at the evening's prospects. Drawn into a congregation they ardently professed to despise, they had unwittingly become full-fledged members of the Elvis Presley Admiration Society.

In reality, the dissonant comradery forged in this group was of a melancholy nature. We were all emptily envisioning that some void in our existence would be replenished by watching a man, really just an ordinary man, perform that night. In desperation, we had turned to him for resolution of personal despair and futility. The powerful, high voltage energy that seemed so dangerously stalwart was only echoes originating in restless souls that longed to find a reason.

A sense of foreboding overtook me, and I felt a chilling wave pass over all of us in this timeless cavern. Perhaps we became aware, for just an instant, of the uselessness and irrationality of our actions. The impression was gone as quickly as it had come, but any pleasure I could derive from this concert had fled into fathomless darkness.

—BARBARA TRANSKI

## Honorable Mention

### THE TIN DRUM: A MODERN MORALITY TALE

Few films are as well conceived and well-made as the recent German release



"The Tin Drum." Destined to be a classic, this adaptation of Gunter Grass's bestselling novel about Germany in the Nazi era is far superior to other contemporary films in both visual achievement and thematic intelligence. Although not for the weak hearted or easily offended, "The Tin Drum" is a stirring, thought-provoking experience that is not to be missed.

Like any serious work of art, "The Tin Drum" operates on several levels. On the surface, the plot follows the adventures of an extraordinary dwarf, Oscar, who at the age of three, willfully ends his physical growth by falling down a flight of stairs. Exposed to the lusty, deceitful behavior of his father, his mother, and their friends, he decided that adult life is not for him and drops out by staging the fall. While developing mentally at a normal rate, Oscar is nonetheless treated as a child by the adults in the film. This combination of a maturing mind in a child's body exposes Oscar (and the audience) to all manner of seamy, lowlife adult behavior. Oscar's view of adult behavior is uncensored by any restraints that adults would normally impose on themselves in the company of other adults. It is this uncensored view of the human condition that is the film's main strength. The audience is immersed from the first in the petty foibles of human kind: greed, drunkenness, cruelty, adultery, racism. The film begins with a graphic, but leisurely detailing of these seamier aspects of the characters' lives. There is also recurrent exposure to the extreme right-wing politics of the Nazis. The themes of moral turpitude and gathering darkness are gradually expanded upon, and the pace of the film is accelerated until events in war time reach a level of non-stop cataclysmic horror and barbarism. Oscar sees everything with the cynical detached clarity resulting from his self-induced divorcement from society. Early on, it becomes apparent that Oscar's view is a camera's view; that the little tin drum that is his constant companion is a metaphor for the harsh, unrelenting rhythm of uncensored truth that is Oscar's (and the film's) profound vision.

The photography throughout is brilliant in its understatement. The somber tones and hues of a medieval-built Polish town, dimly lit interiors, gray fortifications, an empty beach, provide a sharply contrasting background for fine performances of unusual nuance and depth. The combination of believable performances and grotesque subject matter makes for nightmare images that linger unbidden in the mind long after the film has ended. Especially fine is the actress who portrays Oscar's mother. During some of the most physically gruesome scenes ever filmed, she delivers a strong, convincing portrait of a guilt-ridden woman in the throes of a nervous breakdown. Despite its considerable visual genius, it is as a serious consideration of moral responsibility in modern society that "The Tin Drum" succeeds.

The role of art is to advise society, to help mankind progress. By evoking barbaric images of mankind's not-too-distant past, "The Tin Drum" asks, "Can it happen again? Are war, jingoism, destruction, and mass murder the inevitable extensions of the dark side of human nature? What is an individual's responsibility in times of social unrest and domestic turmoil?" By asking these important questions and by providing insights into man's destructive tendencies, "The Tin Drum" ensures itself of a place among the great, socially relevant works of modern time. This critic reiterates: it is not to be missed.

—WILLIAM WATSON

**OPEN CONTEST—1981**  
**First Prize Winner**

**CALLOUSES**

*Alone, I work away these November mornings  
in the wood lot sheltered by the dunes.  
With hardened hands skilled now at the cleaving,  
I split the logs*

of knotty cherry and clean-grained oak  
that in spring we cut with meticulous care,  
and were by the change well-seasoned.

Surrounded by the abruptly rising dunes so massive  
but constantly shifting, inconstant,  
The pine woods seem sterile and bare,  
and the orchard stands ankle deep in fallen, forgotten fruit  
mouldering in brisk and chilly air,  
While my feet, well booted and warm,  
scuff and swirl rude patterns  
in the saw dust, pine needles,  
and frost moistened sand,  
Warm breath expelled in spouts of steam,  
heart like a metronome beating,  
counterpoint the anvil-like ringing of sledgehammer on wedge,  
the muffled thump of ax or maul.  
The callouses born of blisters have hardened,  
and my aim has become more true.  
I have become quite skilled  
at the cleaving  
Though the learning has chilled me through.

Alone, I pause from working  
to stare skyward at the passing  
of some Canada geese.  
Those raucous flocks, so purposefully  
they stride down the grey sky  
leaving winter and me miles behind.

Strong wings and restless heart,  
I could not enamour you  
of this cabin in a vale of dunes,  
with its clear, cool, deep well,  
rough stone walls and ancient timbers.  
For at the first hint of winter  
you took to wing, so eager to pursue  
some tropical sun, some langorous noon  
whose capture was integral to you.

And I remain,  
as the days grow short  
surrounded by promises (turned to lies)  
we spoke so hot and fervently  
with lips and heart and thigh.  
I cannot look at fresh-split kindling  
or behold the wild geese so high,  
without the memory of your sun  
golden hair or the long silky lash of your eye.

So by evening I sit with  
muscles tired and write  
by the light of a solitary fire.  
Cloistered in these familiar walls and grounds,  
I draw fragrant lines  
from the deep, old well  
that cannot go dry or turn bitter



and embellish them with droplets  
of gold as luminous as the summer sun  
that holds you so distant in its thrall.  
I have become quite skilled  
at the rhyming,  
though its gift is windswept, and dry,  
and if you come back the cabin in the dunes  
you might discover another man,  
and not I.

—WILLIAM WATSON

## Second Prize Winner

### THE ALLEGORY OF BRITOMART

Much of the intellectual and artistic beauty contained in allegory lies in its ability as a literary device to subtly and delicately provoke archetypal, societal, and/or cultural responses in the reader, which in turn lend themselves to involvement by the reader in a world of vision and experience previously undetected. Allegory demands perhaps more skill, interaction, and participation than any other extant literary form. Clearly, if the work is to have any lasting significance, the author's adeptness in drawing imagery that will evoke the requisite response, not only in his contemporaries but in later generations, cannot be discounted. However, just as clearly, allegory demands total participation from its reader. Flashes of visual images and unformed impressions cannot be casually handled, because to cast them off unexamined is to cut the thread that binds allegorical elements together. It is possible to enjoy allegory simply at its primary, or literal, level, but to do so is to forego the challenge of patiently, and frequently instinctively, piecing together odd and alluring glimpses of a misty, ethereal landscape until a new, solid country clearly emerges.

Spenser's *The Faerie Queene* affords an excellent demonstration of allegory operating at its fullest potential and of the reader's subsequent need to aggressively participate in its action. Although the whole of *The Faerie Queene* is a sustained allegory and operates on several levels at once, this paper will limit its scope to Book III, "The Legend of Chastity," in general, and to its titular heroine, Britomart, in particular.

Initially it must be acknowledged that Britomart must first be encountered at face value, or on the literal level:

... Spenser . . . labors to render the fiction in its own right. It is an image presented in realistic and visual detail . . . Clearly the poet labors to make us see. His whole effort is to render a clearly-defined, exact, and visual image.<sup>1</sup>

Britomart is a thoughtful creation: she is thoroughly, realistically, and finely drawn, and she is meant to be accepted in her own right. Britomart moves through the pages of Book III in accordance with the internally consistent laws of Faery; she is raging and gentle by turns; she is feminine and yet fully capable of functioning in a masculine world. She is at once appealing, acceptable, consistently defined, and believable. Clearly she is operating as a fully delineated character on a literal level.

At the same time, it must be recognized that Britomart operates also as an allegory of woman and thus, by implication, every woman. She functions effectively in a masculine world filled with strange, marvelous adventures and "hideous horrors," and her courage and capability earn the respect, admiration, and companionship of Guyon and the Prince:

Thus reconcilment was between them knitt,  
 Through goodly temperaunce and affection chaste;  
 And either vovd with all their power and witt  
 To let not others honour be defaste  
 Of friend or foe, who ever it embaste;  
 Ne arms to beare against the others syde:  
 In which accord the Prince was also plaste,  
 And with that golden chaine of concord tyde.  
 So goodly all agreed they forth yfere did ryde (i, 12).

Yet Britomart is ever possessed with unmistakable grace, warmth, and beauty, as illustrated in the Castle Joyous when her armour fails to obscure the sheer magnificence of her femininity:

As when fayre Cynthia, in darkesome night,  
 Is in a noyous cloud enveloped,  
 Where she may finde the substance thin and light,  
 Breakes forth her silver beames, and her bright hed  
 Discovers to the world discomfited:  
 Of the poore traveiler that went astray  
 With thousand blessings she is heried.  
 Such was the beautie and the shining ray,  
 With which fayre Britomart gave light unto day (i, 43).

Spenser further reinforces the allegory by capturing the eternal childlike and playful nature of "every woman" in two delightful instances in Canto II. What more universal image could be presented that might better portray the childlike curiosity and absorption of woman than Britomart's first looking into Merlin's mirror and dreaming of her future:

Where when she had espyde that mirrhour fayre,  
 Her selfe awhile therein she vewd in vaine:  
 Tho, her avizing of the vertues rare  
 Which thereof spoken were, she gan againe  
 Her to bethinke of that mote to her selfe pertaine.  
 . . .  
 So thought this Mayd (as maydens use to done)  
 Whom fortune for her husband would allott:  
 Not that she lusted after any one;  
 For she was pure from blame of sinfull blott;  
 Yet wist her,life at last must lincke in that same knot  
 (ii, 22-23).

Or what might better illustrate the playful and curiously innocent way of woman than when Britomart artfully leads Guyon to disclose to her his opinion of Arthegall's honor? Indeed, what woman could not but respond in a similar manner to praise of her beloved?

The royall Maid woxe inly wondrous glad,  
 To heare her Love so highly magnifyde;  
 And joyd that ever she affixed had  
 Her hart on knight so goodly glorifyde,  
 How ever finely she it faind to hyde (ii, 11).

Britomart is mysteriously defined and redefined, and yet she remains indefinable. She is at once elusive, indomitable, fragile, and strong. She shifts momentarily between rage and tenderness, righteous indignation and compassion, impetuosity and reason. She wavers on the threshold between child-woman and woman-child. She is woman, and every woman.



Yet she is still more than woman, for in Britomart, Spenser has captured that single element that he intended the whole of Book III to represent. Britomart is the very embodiment of chastity. Her beauty is the inner and outward beauty that the innocent, loyal, and godly possess, and her presence bespeaks the power that virtue commands:

For shee was full of amiable grace  
And manly terror mixed therewithall,  
That as the one stird up affections bace,  
So th'other did mens rash desires apall,  
And hold them backe that would in error fall:  
As hee that hath espide a vermeill Rose,  
To which sharp thornes and breres the way forstall,  
Dare not for dread his hardy hand expose,  
But wishing it far off his ydle wish doth lose (i, 46).

Another, subtler form of imagery is also employed by Spenser to further reinforce the allegorical functioning of Britomart as chastity:

. . . [T]o symbolize the singular power of chastity as a positive force Spenser uses the image of light breaking through an obscuring veil. At every point in the poem where Britomart removes her armor the effect of her beauty and chastity on her companions is described in images that make her virtue apparent to the reader as a visible force. In Castle Joyous Britomart lifts only the visor of her helmet:

But the brave Mayd would not disarmed bee,  
But onely vented up her umbriere,  
And so did let her goodly visage to appere.

As when fayre Cynthia, in darkesome night,  
Is in a noyous cloud enveloped,  
Where she may finde the substance thin and light,  
Breakes forth her silver beames, and her bright hed  
Discovers to the world discomfited;  
Of the poore traveiler that went astray  
With thousand blessings she is heried.  
Such was the beautie and the shining ray,  
With which fayre Britomart gave light unto the day  
(i, 42-43).

Again in Canto IX when she removes her helmet:

An eke that stranger knight emonst the rest  
Was for like need enforst to disaray:  
Tho, whenas vailed was her lofty crest,  
Her golden locks, that were in trammells gay  
Upbounded, did them selves adowne display  
And raught unto her heeles; like sunny beames,  
That in a cloud their light did long time stay,  
Their vapour faded, shewe their golden gleames,  
And through the persant aire shoote forth their azure  
streames (ix, 20).

In each instance the comparison is based on light breaking through an obscuring veil. The image is appropriate on these occasions when Britomart reveals herself—light, goodness, beauty,

truth breaking through darkness, evil, ugliness, or falsity, but in particular these similes symbolize the force of her chastity.<sup>2</sup>

The light and dark imagery again reveals Britomart functioning allegorically on yet another level, for we may also see her as the traditional "wayfaring, warfaring Christian" of medieval and Renaissance literature. Clearly her initial exposure to Arthegail through Merlin's mirror is tantamount to a vision, and her awakening can be understood as a mystical experience:

Eftsoones there was presented to her eye  
A comely knight, all arm'd In complete wize,  
Through whose bright ventayle, lifted up on hye,  
His manly face, that dld his foes agrize,  
And frends to termes of gentle truce entize,  
Lookt forth, as Phoebus face out of the east  
Betwixt two shady mountaynes doth arize:  
Portly his person was, and much increast  
Through his Heroicke grace and honorable gest (ii, 24).

The portrait of a lover tormented by unfulfilled love can by simple elevation easily be understood as the soul's apprehension of its imperfection and its incompleteness, and of its sensitivity to a higher reality. Britomart's quest for Arthegail thus becomes a quest to achieve union with that higher reality.

There is a price to pay in that quest, for Britomart must shed her innocence to don the armor that every Christian needs against the temptations of this world. She fails in her first battle against temptation in the Castle Joyous when she does not perceive Malecasta's lust, and she suffers for her guilelessness:

But one of those sixe knights, Gardante hight,  
Drew out a deadly bow and arrow keene,  
Which forth he sent, with felonous despight  
And fell Intent, against the virgin sheene:  
The mortall steele stayd not till it was seene  
To gore her side; yet was the wound not deepe,  
But lightly rased her soft silken skin,  
That drops of purple blood thereout did weepe,  
Which did her lilly smock with staines of vermeil  
steep (ii, 55).

In Canto XII, Britomart's virtue and faith allow her through the wall of flames that guards the entrance to Busirane's castle, much to the distress of Scudamour, whose doubt and earthly loves do not permit his passage. But here, too, Britomart falls short of perfection when she hesitates after the procession of the Maske of Cupid:

So soone as they were In, the dore streightway  
Fast locked, driven with that stormy blast  
Which first it opened, and bore all away.  
Then the brave Maid, which all this while was plast  
in secret shade, and saw both first and last,  
Issewed forth, and went unto the dore  
To enter in, but fownd it locked fast:  
It vaine she thought with rigorous uprore  
For to efforce, when charmes had closed it afore  
(xii, 27).

Britomart atones for her failure and successfully wins entrance to Busirane's inner chamber, but she must still pay the price:



From her, to whom his fury first he ment,  
 The wicked weapon rashly he did wrest,  
 And, turning to herself, his fell intent,  
 Unwares it strooke into her showie chest,  
 That little drops empurpled her faire brest.  
 Exceeding wroth therewith the virgin grew,  
 Albe the wound were nothing deepe imprest,  
 And fiercely forth her mortall blade she drew,  
 To give him the reward for such vile outrage dew  
 (xii, 33).

The process of purification is complete, because her strength and righteous anger now enable her to accomplish her intended mission, Amoret's rescue. A later Book shows the victorious achievement of her quest, but our journey with the "wayfaring, warfaring Christian," Britomart, must end with her victory in Busirane's castle.

In essence, then, allegory may claim its right to existence merely on the basis of its fictional level, for it can be a pleasurable experience involving imagination and a flight into fantasy. However, the fact should not be overlooked that allegory can also afford the discerning reader a valuable opportunity to locate himself within the cosmic scheme through his apprehension of, and participation in, certain universal and archetypal processes. The ability of allegory to draw man out of his alienation and to project him into the collective human race may well be allegory's greatest contribution.

#### NOTES

<sup>1</sup>A.C. Hamilton, "The Nature of Spenser's Allegory." In *The Prince of Poets: Essays on Edmund Spenser*, ed. John R. Elliott, Jr. (New York: New York University Press, 1968), p. 243.

<sup>2</sup>Thomas P. Roche, Jr., "The Image of Britomart." In *The Prince of Poets: Essays on Edmund Spenser*, ed. John R. Elliott, Jr. (New York: New York University Press, 1968), pp. 285-286.

—SUSAN HOWARD

### Third Prize Winner

#### THE DRAMA OF TRANSCENDENCE

A study of the drama of the past one hundred years reflects an explosion taking place within the consciousness of Twentieth Century man. Whether it is a theater concerned with the unshackling of exterior social mores or one rebelling against the fettering of our interior perceptions, the flight towards freedom has been and always will be the concern of great dramatists. The unique way in which each of them confronts and attempts to transcend their chains, and in the process making us aware that they exist for us all, propels us towards confronting and transcending our own individual, unique shackles.

Gerhart Hauptman in *The Weavers*, for example, focuses upon the exterior forces which imprison and control men's lives. Hauptman's weavers come to realize their bondage and finally to rebel against the class and social structure which forces them to exist as animals. Their courage and humanity assert themselves as they *choose* to rebel against a system which, although physically stronger than they, is nonetheless spiritually bankrupt. Their rebellion will be crushed, but the turning point has taken place. The seed of a new perception—of rebellion—among the weavers' consciousness has been implanted and will there germinate. The difficult decision necessary to *choose* to recreate their perception of reality and to act upon it has given the weavers their humanity and realized their freedom.

The exterior dragons are always easier to confront than the internal demons which plague us. In Eugene O'Neill's *The Ice-Man Cometh*, for example, each character maintains his reason for being by making it dependent upon a "pipe dream." O'Neill's pessimism and despondency concerning man's inability to cling to any tangible reason for living is reflected in his drunken cast of characters. Illusion sustains them all. Not one of them can cope with their lives when Hickey pricks their "pipe dream" balloons. The irony is that the balloons are never burst because Hickey's strident insistence upon facing up to reality is itself a "pipe dream."

O'Neill fails as a dramatist in this play because he points out the great void of nothingness but he cannot transcend it by offering us another vision. If drama is conflict, then there must be a resolution. O'Neill is not a philosopher. He boldly confronts the great abyss of nothingness and is stopped cold. His characters, as he himself, cannot go beyond, make another step or a leap of faith, which transcends their pessimism. As such, the play strips man of his very real power to choose, to become whom he wills to create. Unlike Satin in Gorki's *The Lower Depths*, who finally affirms and transcends, Hickey stays in the mire of his own choosing, never realizing that he has chosen.

It is precisely this recognition of man's ability to perceive as he wills which makes works such as Luigi Pirandello's *Henry IV* and Jean Giraudoux's *The Mad Woman of Chaillot* superior to O'Neill's. Pirandello rests the responsibility for perception upon each individual. Whereas O'Neill realized a universal nothingness, he failed to see, as Pirandello and Giraudoux did, that all reality hinges upon a matter of individual perception. The answer to what is or is not real comes from within for all of us, and we choose to create as we will. Pirandello's *Henry IV* and Giradoux's *Madwoman* recognize their will and their freedom to create reality as none of the characters in *The Ice-Man Cometh* does. The Madwoman and Henry IV are free. The patrons of Harry Hope's bar are automatons.

The characters of Eugene Ionesco's *Bald Soprano* are also automatons. Ionesco succeeds as a dramatist, however, by first mirroring and then shattering our self-image. His vision of whom we ought to be and how we should interact is obviously the opposite of the behavior of the characters within the play. O'Neill said that "pipe dreams" are our inescapable destiny. Ionesco, on the other hand, compels us to confront the Martins and the Smiths within ourselves, and he thereby evokes a crisis of perception. "We are not the Martins and the Smiths," we say to ourselves, "but then again are we not?" The dramatic conflict takes place within ourselves as we reject his characters. Ionesco explodes our banal lives and asks us to transcend our non-interaction, our non-communion.

As bleak as Samuel Beckett's play, *Endgame* and *Waiting for Godot* are, they transcend the intellectual recognition of nothingness by their humanity and the poetry of their language. Beckett's characters might be bent over in pain with the cognition of an uncaring universe, but, nonetheless, they are not crushed to the point whereby they are incapable of not choosing to wait, to hope, to care.

This recognition of man's ability to transcend his environment and himself is the inherent quality of the drama of the last one hundred years. Whether the dramatists ask us to transcend our heredity like Ibsen in *Ghosts* or the claustrophobic impositions of a society's hierarchical structure as Strindberg does in *Miss Julie*, or even to give up our illusions of the past as Chekhov does in *The Cherry Orchard*, all of them ask us to understand ourselves and to transcend our safe and petty perceptions. Paul Tillich has said that "Man becomes truly human only at the moment of decision." The dramatists who have influenced our consciousness have given us, through the pain of their own transcendence and art, a recognition of our own ability to see and thereby to become greater than we are.

—EDUARD ERSLOVAS



## Honorable Mention

### “DOVER BEACH”—SUBLIME SUBJECTIVITY

*All things sublunary are subject to change.*  
—Dryden

Knowing from the first day of the Nineteenth Century literature class that a paper would be due, he habitually came to read each required poem closely with the hope that one would spark his imagination. He achingly needed to connect with a poet's healing balm. Reading poem after poem, he appreciated some of them mentally, and he responded emotively to others. Finally, on the last day of the summer session, the professor read “Dover Beach.” The student euphorically said to himself, “Yes! Yes! This is the poem. This is the poet.”

Years ago, a few weeks after his mother's death, he had travelled to the pristine northern woods and shores of Lake Superior. The death had deadened him. Out of love and kindness, an old friend had taken the student north and away. And so, he found himself, one frigid November and Jack Daniels-filled night, on a rise overlooking the dull darkness of the great lake, woods, and night. Only the myriad of stars gave off any light.

But, their constant light was cold, far away, uncaring. To be a star, the student thought, and never feel again, instead of being one of the warm, bleeding wee beasties who expend the flicker of their light quivering alone with fear and dread and knowing. The cold, implacable stars mocked the two, warm-bodied friends with the infinity of their light—never to be extinguished—travelling always on and on through space and time. There was no god in these heavens. Internally, he raged and wept. If this is to be our condition, he thought, finally spent, so be it. Turning to his friend, he said, “Let's go.”

Then he had felt “Dover Beach,” but only now could he appreciate its hauntingly echoic existential elements intellectually. Nature, religion, and the world outside of the self did not provide the necessary reasons for being for Arnold, nor could they for the student. Already restlessly searching for the answer which would stop the questions while still in his teens, the student had earnestly begun to read philosophy and religion. The rationale which would satisfy the need to know and which would provide the way to proceed eluded him.

At the age of twenty—after a grey brooding bout of a year of Beckett—Sartre, Camus, and Kierkegaard beckoned to him, “Existence precedes essence.” The student took heart: a chord vibrated. He would proceed, as unknowingly and unavoidably he had always done, subjectively. Ironically, the mad search for an answer, which had led him plunging outside of himself, ultimately led him back to the self.

And so a chord was struck upon his soul's Aeolian harp by Arnold's “Dover Beach.” Arnold's intuitively subjective response to his malaise was Dionysian. He recognized that the Apollonian orientation of dispassionate logic would not satisfy his yearnings for an answer, for solace. Arnold heroically, considering his time and temperament, committed himself and chose involvement not on the basis of a rationalization, but rather on the basis of an intuitive knowing. He chose to love, acknowledging full well the impermanence of a person's temporal lot upon life's “darkling plain.” He chose to proceed as he perceived, to walk the tightrope of life without a net, and thereby became free.

—EDUARD ERSLOVAS

## Honorable Mention

### REALITY AND KING LEAR

The tragedy *King Lear* is a play hidden in the understanding of appearance and

reality. Through disguise, deceit, and often even choice, the characters betray and lie to themselves and each other. This push and pull between appearance and reality makes for a great deal of tension and dramatic irony. Though the characters may not know who is pulling their strings, the audience most certainly does. In *King Lear* not only is there the question of appearance and reality, but also the question of who is controlling the nature of the situation.

The play opens with Lear dividing his kingdom among his daughters according to what he believes is their measure of love for him. Lear states his reasons for giving up his kingdom:

Know that we have divided  
In three our kingdom: and 'tis our fast intent  
To shake all cares and business from our age  
(I, i, 38-40).

In this speech we see a notion which may have been confusing to the Shakespearean audience. The world view of the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries consisted of a hierarchical order. The world existed for them in a very ordered, limited, and structured way; man should thus emulate the cosmic order. Lear is attempting to move from his place of command, to move a step down the ladder. This mistake in the world of man is later reflected in nature in the form of a storm. Nature is also disrupted by Lear's actions.

Lear, in the beginning, is in control of reality. He has the choice in the matters of his existence. He also has a choice when he listens to his daughter's declarations of love. He chooses to see Regan and Goneril's obviously overdone flattery as truth. Cordelia's simple statement of love and duty stands pale in comparison to the flowery speeches of the older sisters. Lear mistakes mere words for feeling. In making this choice, Lear sets his own course for destruction. He places himself and his reality into the hands of those most likely to harm him. When Kent attempts to show him his error, Lear banishes Kent along with Cordelia. In exiling Kent and Cordelia, Lear has lost his only aid to reality. Throughout the play, Kent and Cordelia are the only characters who remain undeceived. As she prepares to leave, Cordelia makes a request of Regan and Goneril:

Use well our father:  
To your professed bosoms I commit him:  
But yet, stood I within his grace,  
I would prefer him a better place (I, i, 74-77).

Regan and Goneril may present the exterior of loving daughters, but only Cordelia is reality.

In the Gloucester subplot, Edmund is in control of both Edgar and the Earl of Gloucester; much in the same manner in *Iago* controls Othello, he plays one against the other. Edmund throws suspicion on Edgar by showing Gloucester a letter which has been forged. In the same scene, Edmund gives Edgar cause to believe that the Earl has been offended by something Edgar has done. Edgar neatly arranges the situation and is in control of both his brother and father.

The Earl of Kent, though an agent of reality, must don a disguise to remain in Lear's entourage and service. He will "serve where dost stand condemned" (I, iv, 6). Though he may appear to be someone else, Kent is still a man loyal to the king. When Lear questions this new man about his motives and plans, Kent replies that he is honest and desirous of service to the king. Kent remains by the side of the king to aid him, though Lear knows not his true reality.

The contrast between Lear and his fool is the most marked case of appearance versus reality. Lear, having given up his kingdom, maintains the title and a hundred knights; he maintains the appearance of dignity and wisdom. Yet in truth, he is more of the fool. The fool speaks more truth than Lear. The rhyme which the fool repeats to Lear somewhat comments upon the nature of appearance and



reality in the play:

Have more than thou showest,  
Speak less than thou knowest,..., (I, iv, 131-32).

These two lines can be applied accurately to Lear. Those characters who control do not reveal all the cards they hold. Lear has much less than he seems to possess. The royal title and the group of knights are merely a facade; Lear has forsaken the power that should go hand-in-hand with title and following. If he had retained his kingdom, he would not be suffering as he is. The second line seems to apply aptly to his daughters. While Cordelia spoke less than she felt and knew, Regan and Goneril used empty words to cover the emptiness of their hearts. Edmund knows much more than his brother and father; he is a keeper of secret information. Kent is possessed of more of the power of reality than Lear. Even the fool retains more of the truth.

The fool, in reality, is wisdom. The bandying between Lear and the fool indicates the nature of reality for Lear: "He will not believe a fool" (I, iv, 149). The fool calls King Lear a fool, saying, "All other titles thou hast given away; that thou wast born with" (I, iv, 163). The fool reduces the complexities of Lear's situation to basics: the wiseman is turned to fool. The fool also speaks of the reversal between the roles of parent and child. Lear has given authority to his daughters and now appears to be the child. Lear is beginning to show signs of confusion and uncertainty. At the fool's mockery, Lear bursts forth:

Doth any here know me? This is not Lear:  
Doth Lear walk thus? speak thus? Where are his eyes?  
Either his notion weakens, his discernings  
Are lethargied—Ha! waking? 'tis not so.  
Who is it that can tell me who I am? (I, iv, 246-50).

Lear's mention of eyes is extremely important. Lear has sight, but he cannot see truth. The Gloucester subplot greatly concerns itself with this theme. Gloucester cannot discern the true natures of his sons until he has been blinded.

Images of this kind of division and paradox are brought up in the characters' speeches as well as manner. Kent says, "There is division/Although as yet the face of it be covered/With mutual cunning" (III, i, 19-21).

Division is also reflected in the weather. Storms break out as the daughters Lear believed in reject him. Lear rages at the storm which is nature's reaction to his sin of superbia, the attempt to alter one's place in the hierarchy of being. The effects of Lear's folly reach farther than his family and kingdom. The entire cosmos is disturbed. In Lear's curses and speeches, it is possible to see that he understands the torments that the heavens are undergoing because of him. Yet he feels the blame lies within Goneril and Regan. "I am a man/More sinned against that sinning," he shouts to the Heavens (III, ii, 58-59). Lear's madness becomes more evident as the weight of confusion, tension, and disguise mount. Totally oblivious to the storm, it is only when he listens to his fool that he decides to seek shelter.

In this same scene, Lear comes upon Edgar dressed as a mad beggar. The guise of madman will later be adopted by Lear. Lear says of Edgar, "First let me talk with this philosopher. What is the cause of thunder?" (III, iv, 159-60). Perhaps he is jocularly speaking of the mad Tom o'Bedlam as a philosopher and later as "a learned Theban." Yet with the tension surrounding Lear, it is possible to regard his words as reality. Madness was a malady only a little understood in Shakespeare's time. It was often considered akin to possession. Lear's question about the cause of the thunder relates to the nature of the storm. He is wondering where the trouble lies. He is also beginning to realize that some of the strife may be from within himself.

In a following scene Lear, Gloucester, Kent, Edgar, and the fool are gathered in a farmhouse. The gathering presents the collection of disguise and deception in the play. Lear, king in name only, is mad. Edgar appears as a madman; yet he is not. Kent is Lear's loyal servant, disguised as another servant, unbeknownst to Lear. The fool toys with wisdom. Gloucester knows not that his true and worthy son is before him. Utter chaos reigns in the play.

In the final acts of the play, we see the reversals of appearance and reality among Goneril, Regan, Albany, and Edmund. Albany refers to Lear's eldest children as "Tigers, not daughters" (IV, ii, 40). Their countenances are no longer human: he sees them and their actions as animal-like. He refers to his wife as a "changed and self-cover'd thing" (IV, ii, 63). Her shape may be womanly, but she is monstrous beneath. The ultimate deceivers are then deceived. Regan and Goneril, both in love with Edmund and both bent on having him, deceive each other in the matter. Edmund also lies to each of them about his loyalties. This tangled threesome results in Regan's poisoning by Goneril and Goneril's taking of her own life.

In the end deceptions are reversed, and truth is revealed. Lear discovers Cordelia's love, and Gloucester discerns the love in Edgar. The villains are disposed of, leaving only Edgar, Kent, and Albany to carry on. Edgar and Kent, counterparts of one another, were forced to wear a disguise to demonstrate love and loyalty. Kent and Edgar were also the truth seers and believers. Albany eventually reveals himself to be clear-headed. The remaining characters had the strength to persevere.

*King Lear* is filled with references and allusions to change, disguise, and division. Those who believe in appearance cannot survive; those who are realistic must hide to save themselves. The circle is endless, and the tension becomes higher and higher as disguise meets disguise. Appearance clashes with appearance, only to form reality. Shakespeare makes great use of subtle shifts in perception by allowing certain characters the ability to control the reality of others. Through these shifts, he creates a play which captures interest from the start and holds it until the final unmasking.

—BONNIE SPEARS

## Honorable Mention

### "SINCE FEELING IS FIRST"

*since feeling is first  
who pays any attention  
to the syntax of things  
will never wholly kiss you;  
wholly to be a fool  
while Spring is in the world  
my blood approves,  
and kisses are a better fate  
than wisdom  
lady i swear by all flowers, Don't cry  
—the best gesture of my brain is less than  
your eyelids' flutter which says*

*we are for each other: then  
laugh, leaning back in my arms  
for life's not a paragraph*

*And death i think is no parenthesis*

—e. e. cummings

The poem "since feeling is first" by e. e. cummings creates a rich physical ex-



perience for the reader while criticizing the moralistic conventions of a rule-conscious world. The speaker is an unpretentious man who not only accepts his sensuality, but delights in it. He is trying to convince the woman in the poem to free herself from the inhibitions which prevent her feeling fully. The author's purpose is to convince the reader that the physical aspects of the world are the truest and that rules and order are what prevent us from feeling totally. In other words, we should live out lives unhampered by the rules of order and convention so that we may experience the complexity of ourselves through the honesty of physical involvements.

The tone is positive and pleasant. Various words, such as "Spring", "flowers", "laugh" and "kisses" have pleasurable and affirmative connotations and thus create the tone. The use of euphonious words beginning with the "w" and "i" sounds further enhances this feeling. The references to pleasurable physical activities, such as kissing, laughing and "leaning back in my arms" also contribute to the overall tone. The long vowel sounds in many of the words ("who", "pays", "to" and "fate") also suggest softness and that feeling of pleasure.

The man in the poem tells the woman that feeling is the most important thing in our lives and that those who do not relish this physical contact will never love completely. Because feeling, both physical and emotional, is the most important thing in our lives, anyone who denies his sensuality and concentrates instead on the rules or the formal order of things will never be able to give himself completely, his body and soul. The man accepts and approves of being totally open and honest and of playing the fool, which implies a vulnerability not commonly found in men. To be a "fool", one does not conform to the rigidity of the world's social rules. He swears by all that is real and honest in the world that it is true that one gets more enjoyment from these feelings than from the more intellectual aspects of life. He tells her that she should not regret her true feelings nor should she deny them. Everything that could be argued with logic is nothing compared to the truth he sees in her eyes...that they are meant for each other. Therefore, they should encourage these feelings and should be together to experience all that they can give one another. Life is not a matter to be categorized neatly into single-minded responses. It is too uncertain. Death may end experience, and there may be nothing after death to look forward to. This may be all that they will ever have.

The poem abounds with tactile and kinetic imagery, which punctuates the poet's purpose. The imagery provides both internal and external physical sensations. "Feeling" presents the theme of the poem in a multi-layered sense. One thinks of emotional as well as physical feelings. Other words, such as "kiss", "cry", "lean back" and "flutter" suggest physical motion and involvement. The idea of "blood" which "approves" suggests an internal sensation. "Spring" suggests a potpourri of sensual images: seeing, hearing, smelling, tasting and touching. "Flowers" and "flutter" present visual images as well. "Laugh" suggests both an internal sensation and an aural one.

Life is compared to a paragraph near the end of the poem: "for life's not a paragraph". Since a paragraph consists of a group of sentences concerning the same topic, this statement implies that life is a variety of feelings, both emotional and physical. It cannot be categorized neatly by rules (syntax). Another interesting metaphor ends the poem: "...death...is no parenthesis". Parenthesis enclose incidental material of lesser importance in a sentence. Liking life to a sentence and death to parentheses, death may interrupt with incidental material, and then life goes on again. If death is no parenthesis, then life stops with death and is only *now*. There is no incidental matter (period after death) and no continuation of life (rebirth).

The substitution of "blood" for the whole body of a person is appropriate in that it creates a much more physical experience than a simple "I" or "my body" could produce. "Eyelids" could also be a metonymy for the soul or essence of a person. We refer to the eyes as "the windows to the soul." These eyelids may "flutter" unconsciously conveying her true feelings. If the fluttering is deliberate, flirting gives a frivolous connotation, and this extends the pleasurable attitude in



the poem while creating another physical sensation to be enjoyed.

The poem has a number of symbols to consider. "Syntax" is a key word, referring not only to the rules of sentence formation, but also to the rules of society. It may represent the conventions of the social world which place inhibitions on our natural behavior. Spring is traditionally a symbol for rebirth, a time for romantic inclinations and for religious reflection. I think the author intends these meanings and also the lack of convention some so-called "fools" exhibit in this particular season. "Kisses" and "wisdom" could also be symbolic of the physical and intellectual aspects of the world. "i swear by all flowers" represents the physical aspect as opposed to the traditional, "I swear by all that's holy" (the sacred aspect).

The alliteration in the title and the first line ("feeling is first") calls attention to the idea of the whole poem. It also slows down the pronunciation of these words and, therefore, emphasizes them. "Wholly" is repeated twice in the first section of the poem and is effective in placing a greater emphasis on the deeper meaning intended. The author wishes to convey the depth of feeling possible if one believes in physical freedom. He uses a word which could suggest both one's entire being (wholly) and also one's spiritual essence (holy). The use of "wholly" also concurs with the use of other fluid sounds, such as "while", "will", "world", "wisdom" and "who". The repetition of the "oo" sound in "who", "you", "fool" and "approves" slows the poem while also maintaining the smoother, more euphonious sounds. There is also a repetition of the fluid "l" and "f" sounds in the words, "lady", "laugh", "less", "fool", "flutter" and "fate". This adds to the tone and to the poem's fluidity. The repetition of "s" sounds in such words as "Spring", "kiss", "since", "syntax" and "swear" also adds to the smoothness of the poem.

The poem is written in free verse with no regular metrical pattern. This presents a natural movement concurring with the author's purpose to qualify natural experiences. When combined with the choice and arrangement of vowel and consonant sounds, this form also succeeds in slowing down or speeding up certain passages. For example, the line "Don't cry", consisting of two accented syllables, is thus slowed down and accentuated. The use of a final "t" consonant and the initial consonant "c" further emphasizes these words. The poet also uses combinations of short and long vowels to pace the lines. The long vowels throughout the poem take longer to pronounce; the addition of short vowels in certain words speeds up the pace. For instance, in the first stanza the last few words have short vowel sounds, and the movement proceeds rapidly to the next line, which continues the thought.

Despite a number of variations, the form somewhat resembles a sonnet. It is continuous in form. Grammatical punctuation serves to delineate certain groups of meaning. For instance, the use of a semicolon after "you" in the fourth line indicates a break between main clauses which are similar in meaning. The first part of the sentence indicates a belief and the second part is a statement of the speaker's personal commitment to this belief. The comma after "approves" in the first line of the second stanza is a similar situation. It may indicate that the statement following is not essential to the sentence, but adds to it. The man feels strongly about allowing his physical aspects to dominate him and adds the idea that "kisses" (the physical) are also more pleasant than "wisdom" (the intellectual). The period after "flowers" and the capitalization of "Don't" seem to indicate a transition in the poem. The speaker begins to argue his point in earnest at this juncture. The abrupt stop necessitated by the period and the use of a capital letter to begin an important section give a feeling of one's taking a breath and then plunging on. The dash also indicates an important break in a thought. It intensifies the speaker's petition to be happy in one's feelings and not to deny them, but to follow them since they are the truest indicators we have. The semicolon between the words "other" and "then" in the first line of the third section indicates a break between a thought and another which supports and emphasizes it. The man says that the woman honestly believes that they should be



together. He then pleads that they should enjoy what they have because it is the most honest and the truest of all possible experiences.

Cummings is very successful in achieving the purpose he intends in this poem. He omits conventional punctuation and capitalization in much the same way he advises readers to dispose of the traditional conventions of society. The lack of capitalization at the beginning and of punctuation at the end give the poem an open feeling much like that in the natural world. The addition of punctuation in unconventional positions also adds to the poem's purpose to "unconventionalize" the lives of his readers. The poem conveys a sense of naturalness and physical existence which parallels the point Cummings is trying to make. The originality in form and word usage alone make it an interesting experience. Add to this the value of its purpose, and the poem becomes a truly enlightening experience.

—KAREN MCNALLY

## BIOGRAPHIES

**Eduard Erslovas**, formerly in business in Chicago, is enrolled in HSSE as an English major and will graduate this summer. He is from Beverly Shores, is currently editor of the RAPPORT and will begin graduate studies in the fall.

**Susan Howard**, who resides in Valparaiso, began her studies at PNC in the summer of 1978. She is in HSSE, is majoring in English teaching, and has been a contributor to PORTALS for the past two issues.

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